

Of the Happiness of the Saints
40 in Heaven :

A
SERMON
Preach'd before the
QUEEN
AT
WHITE-HALL.
October 12, 1690.

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A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

QUEEN.

COLOS. I. 12.

*Giving thanks unto the Father, which
hath made us meet to be partakers of
the inheritance of the Saints in light.*

ALthough the greatest part of the numerous Off-spring, which hath hitherto proceeded from *Adam's Loins*, be departed out of this Life, and are seen no more among us ; yet we must not therefore think that they are ceased to be, or to live : For still their Souls are as really alive in the other World, as we are now in this.

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And as it is with us here, that some live ill, and others well : So it is with them too ; only in an higher Degree. For some, and as we have just cause to fear, the greatest part of them live with the Fiends of Hell in the Infernal Pit, where they have no Light, nothing but Darkness and Horror to the utmost extremity round about them : where they are always weeping and wailing and gnashing their Teeth, fretting and tormenting themselves at the remembrance of their former Sins and Follies : where, as Christ himself hath told us, *The worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched* : Mar. 9. 44. That is, their Consciences, like greedy and insatiable Worms, are always gnawing, and the fire of God's Wrath is continually burning in their Breasts, never to be quenched or abated. They cannot forbear thinking of what they have done, though every thought cuts them to their very Hearts, and seems ready to split them in funder.

They cannot forbear looking upon God, although they can see nothing in Him but the Wrath and Anger which they themselves have kindled ; which so incenses and enrageth their Minds, that they are all in a flame with fury and indignation at themselves for it. By which means they are continually, as it were, upon a Wrack, Distorted, Afflicted, Distracted, Confounded ; hurried about from place to place, but can find no rest, no quiet ;
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every thing is uneasie and troublesome to them : Yea, they are a burden to themselves, they cannot endure themselves, but wish Ten thousand times they had been better, or had never been at all, or could cease to be, or could be any thing but what they are. But all in vain. And which is worst of all, they do not only suffer the extremity of Pain and Anguish at present, but they can see no end of it : Yea, they see there will be no end at all, being fully assured, that this must be their Portion for ever.

Whereas on the other side, there are others, who are not only free from all the Miseries and Torments which those poor Creatures undergo, but always live in Heaven, in Light, and Love, and Joy, and Peace, and Glory, the highest that they are able to imagine or desire ; being brisk and lively, chearful and pleasant, Holy and Happy all over. And that too (as we shall see more presently) not only now and then, but continually ; nor for some time only, but to all Eternity.

Now we who are still upon Earth, are as yet in neither of these States, neither so extremely Miserable as the first are, nor so perfectly Happy as those are we spake of last : but as it were in the middle between both. But so soon as ever we depart out of this Life, we shall be immediately in one of them, as certainly as we are now here. And I do
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not question but that you all hope for and desire the latter, even to live with those blessed Souls which enjoy perpetual Rest and Felicity in the other World: And that one great End of your coming hither at this time, is to learn what you must do in order to it. And verily ye do well to take all Opportunities you can get, of being assisted and directed in it. For it is a great Thing that you propose to your selves, which can never be attain'd without much care and pains about it. And you are not certain how long time you have to do it in, but most certain it is not very long. But blessed be God, you are all as yet in a Capacity of obtaining it, and it is your own fault if any of you shall happen to miss of it. For Almighty God plainly shews how desirous He is to have you live with Him, and so be Happy in the other World, in that He is still pleased to afford you all the Means that He hath appointed for that purpose: Witness your meeting together here at this time, to joyn together in Prayer to his Divine Goodness for his Assistance in the pursuit of it; and to be put in mind of the course and method which you are to take for the accomplishment of so great and good an End. Concerning which therefore I shall give you the best and plainest Directions I can from the Words which I have now read. In which we may observe,

I. What

- I. What kind of Persons they are, who are or shall be Happy in the other World ; They are *Saints*.
- II. The Happiness they enjoy there, here call'd *the Inheritance of the Saints in light*.
- III. They who desire to enjoy that Happiness must be duly qualified for it, or as it is here expressed, *made meet to be partakers of it*.
- IV. All who are so qualified, must ascribe it wholly unto God, and give him thanks for it, as we see here St. Paul doth, *Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*.

First therefore as to the Persons who live so Happily in the other World, they are here called *Saints*. It is the Inheritance of the *Saints*, of all the *Saints*, and of them only. It is proper and peculiar to them, so that none else have any Right or Title to it, nor can ever have any Part or Portion in it. And that there is such a Company and Society of Men in the World, which are truly called *Saints*, cannot be deny'd by any Christian ; it being one of the Articles of our Creed, wherein we profess to believe, there is a *Communion of Saints*. And unless we be of that
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Communion, we can never partake of the Inheritance of the Saints.

But the great Question is, What it is to be a Saint? or who may be truly and properly called *Saints*, Men of Holiness, or Holy Men, as the Word signifies? But this we can never fully understand, unless we first state the true Notion of Sanctity or Holiness, from whence they are so called. Now Holiness or Sanctity in its highest perfection, is one of the Perfections of God himself, who often calls himself *The Holy One of Israel*, and sometimes absolutely, *The Holy One*. And as He sometimes swears by himself, at other times he swears by his Holiness: *Psal.* 89. 35. Whereby He gives us to understand, that He himself is Holiness, *Amos* 4. 2. or, which is all one, Holiness is himself, his own Divine Nature or Essence. And that's the reason why they who partake of his Holiness, *Heb* 12. 10. are said to partake of his Divine Nature. *2 Pet.* 1. 4.

And hence it is, that when the holy Angels would celebrate the Praises of the most High God in the highest manner they can, they cry, *Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his Glory.* *Isa.* 6. 3. *Rev.* 4. 8. And hence also it is, that when God design'd to make Man after his own Image, as like him as a Creature could be, He made him perfectly holy. And now that this Image is defac'd in us, if it be restored again
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to any Man, so that he becomes a new Man, he is said to be created after God, that is, after the likeness of God, *in righteousness, and true holiness.* Ephes. 4. 24. So that this is the great Perfection, wherein we were at first made, and ought again to become like to God our Maker, who therefore Commands us to be holy as He is Holy. *As he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.* 1 Pet. 1. 15. From whence it appears, That though we cannot be holy in the same measure as God is, who is so without and beyond all measure; yet we should be so after the same manner as He is, or rather our holiness should be of the same Kind or Nature with his, and as like it, as it is possible for it to be.

Hence therefore as Holiness, when attributed to God, denotes the Purity and Excellency of his Divine Nature, whereby He is exalted above all things else: So when attributed to Men, it signifies the purity and excellency of their Nature, whereby they are refined and raised above the rest of Mankind. This the Apostle teacheth us, where he opposeth holiness to uncleanness, saying, *God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.* 1 Thess. 4. 7. And David, where he calls the Saints that are upon Earth, *the excellent*; Psal. 16. 3. Implying, that Saints as such, excell all other Persons, by reason of their holiness, that is the highest excellency which their Nature is

capable of. Which therefore doth not consist in any particular Acts or Habits either of the Soul or Body, or both together, but in the rectitude or due temperament of our Nature in general. And indeed Holiness, properly so called, is nothing else, but that pure and excellent Frame or Disposition of the whole Man, whereby all the Faculties of the Soul and Members of the Body, are reduc'd to their primitive Constitution, and become such as God at first made, and would still have them to be; exerting themselves in their respective Places and Offices, according to those Rules which He hath set them. So that to our perfecting Holiness, as the Apostle speaks, in the fear of God, there is required a right and clear Understanding, a sound Judgment, a pure Heart, an obedient Will, a good Conscience, and regular Affections, placed every one upon its proper Objects in a due manner. And wheresoever the Soul (if I may so speak) is thus all of a piece, all over such as God would have it to be, and so agreeable to his Divine Will, there is true holiness, and such a one may be truly said to be holy, yea, to be holy as God is holy, as being pure and excellent according to his finite Capacity, as God himself is in his infinite Perfections.

Now the true Notion of Holiness or Sanctity being thus briefly stated, we may easily understand what kind of Persons those be, which are here called *Saints*. For in order to a Man's being

being a true Saint, he must first have so much Knowledge of God and Christ, as is necessary to the possessing of his Mind with a due sense of his Divine Majesty, and with right Apprehensions of the great Mystery of our Salvation by Jesus Christ. He must have a sound Judgment in all things, especially in the Fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith, and in all the necessary Duties required in the Gospel. He must have a pure and sincere Heart, in believing all those Articles as revealed, and in performing all such Duties as required by God. He must have a good Conscience, a Conscience void of all offence both towards God and towards Men. He must have a pliable and obedient Will, ready upon all occasions to chuse whatsoever his Understanding rightly inform'd, dictates to be good, and to refuse whatsoever he apprehends to be evil. He must keep his Affections all in their proper order, fixed constantly upon such Objects which they were at first fitted and design'd for. He must hate, abhor, and shun all manner of Sin, upon that account only because it is Sin, or the transgression of God's Law, and be heartily troubled that he was ever guilty of it. He must love God with all his Heart and Soul, and so above all things in the World besides. He must bear no grudge, hatred, malice, or ill-will against any Person upon Earth, but love his Neighbour as himself. He must hunger and thirst after Righteousness, and desire nothing so

much as to serve and please God, and so to have his Love and Favour, whatsoever it costs him. He must not fear them which can kill the Body, but Him only who is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell. He must trust in the Lord with all his Heart, and support himself under all the Circumstances and Occurrences of this Life, with an humble confidence of his Goodness and Mercy in Jesus Christ. He must rejoice in the Lord always, both when he hath, and when he hath not any thing else to rejoice in. He must be sober and temperate, meek and humble, gentle and peaceable, faithful to his word, true to his friend, loving to his enemy, charitable to the poor, kind and merciful, and just to all. In brief, he must be *stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, as knowing that his labour is not in vain in the Lord.* 1 Cor. 15. 58.

And that he may be sure of. For he who hath attain'd to such an excellent Temper as this is, is certainly a real and true Saint, and therefore shall as certainly partake of that transcendent Happiness, which is here called *the Inheritance of the Saints in light*. It is called an *Inheritance*, or, as the Word signifies also, a *Lot*, in allusion to that Type of Heaven, the Land of *Canaan*, which was divided among all the Children of *Israel* by Lot, and is all along in the Old Testament called their *Inheritance*. And so certainly is Heaven in a proper and literal Sense, the *Inheritance* of

of the Saints. For they being all Regenerate and born again of God, are properly his Children, and as the Apostle rightly argues. *If children then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ Rom. 8. 17.* So that all the Saints or Sons of God, in whatsoever Age or Place they were born again from the beginning to the end of the World, they are all co-heirs, and so have an equal right and title to this Inheritance ; not only to some part of it, but to the whole, and all and every one of them equally possess it all. It is not like an Earthly Inheritance, that is divided among the coheirs, some taking one part of it and some another : But every one that hath any share in this Heavenly Inheritance, enjoys it all himself, as much as if he was the sole Heir, and there was none else to partake of it but himself.

Neither are the Saints Joint-heirs only with one another, but as the Apostle there speaks, with Christ himself. And if so, their Inheritance must needs be very large, For *Christ is appointed heir of all things. Heb. 1. 2.* And if they be Joint-heirs with him, as be sure they are, every one of them must inherit all things too as He doth. And so be sure they do. For God himself asserts it, saying, *He that overcometh, shall inherit all things : And I will be his God, and he shall be my Son. Rev. 21. 7.* Where we may observe both the vast extent of this Inheritance of the Saints, and likewise the reason of it. As to its extent, it is not confined to a Parish, or County, or King-

Kingdom upon Earth, no, not to the whole Earth, nor to the Moon nor Sun, nor to any Star, nor to all the Stars of Heaven, nor to the whole Heavens where they are, nor yet to the greatest part of the Creation, but extends it self to the whole. For *they inherit all things*; all things that are good or amiable, all things that are pleasing or delightful, all things that are necessary or convenient for them. All things they can desire or hope for, all things they can love or take comfort in, all things that can any way contribute to their Happiness: As all things in the whole World shall do one way or other.

For even while they are upon Earth, all Things work together for their good, how much more when they come to Heaven? Where they shall clearly see, how all things that ever happened to them through the whole course of their Lives, concurred to bring them thither: and so will be matter of joy and comfort to them when they are there. By which means, they will then take pleasure, not only in all the Devotions, Alms, and good Works, they ever perform'd, but likewise in all the Losses, Crosses, and Disappointments, Pains, Sickneses, and Troubles of all sorts that ever befell them. Yea, and in all things that God ever made, or did, or suffered to be done in the World. For all things are theirs, even while they are here below, as St. Paul assures the Saints at *Corinth*, saying, *All things are*
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yours : whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours. 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. All things are settled upon them at their New birth, and when they come to full Age, that is, as soon as they get to Heaven, they will have the actual Possession of all things, and then must needs enjoy whatsoever any thing in the World can afford them. And what is there in the World, but what affords the Saints in Heaven something to delight and please them ? The Heaven of Heavens affords them most commodious and pleasant Mansions. All the holy Angels there afford them their most agreeable Company and Conversation. All the Devils and Damned in Hell afford them matter of Praise and Thankfulness to God, that they are not there. All the glorious Lights in the Firmament, afford them a most delicious Prospect. In short, all the Animals, and Plants, and Earths, and Stones, and Metals, and Minerals, and whatsoever else God ever made, either in Heaven or Earth, afford them a clear and perfect view of his Divine Perfections, which cannot but affect their Hearts with the highest Transports of Joy and Wonder.

Thus doth every Saint in Heaven Inherit all things. All things are his. And it is no marvel, for God himself is his ; as it follows in the place before Quoted; *He shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son. He shall be my Son, that's the reason*
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he is an Heir ; *I will be his God*, that's the reason that he inherits all things. For he who hath him that hath all things, cannot but have all things in him. Yea, infinitely more than all things else ; all things that God hath made being in a manner nothing in comparison of him that made them. Who therefore to complete the Happiness of his Saints, doth not only give them all He hath, but even himself too, saying, *I will be their God*, or rather, as the VVords signifie, *I will be God to them*. By virtue of which Promise they enjoy not only whatsoever God hath made or done, but likewise whatsoever He is, even all those Infinite, Eternal, Incomprehensible Perfections which are concentred in Him.

But here I must confess my self at a loss, not knowing how to conceive, much less to express either how the Saints in Heaven enjoy God, or how great an Happiness that is to them? Only in general we know they see God Face to Face, as not only St. *Paul*, but likewise St. *John* acquaints us, saying, *Beloved, now we are the Sons of God : And it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* 1 Cor. 13. 12. 1 *John*. 3. 2.

From whence it is evident, That they see God, not only as manifesting himself in his Creatures, but as he is in himself. VVhich blessed Sight, must needs fill them with the highest Joys their finite Nature is able to bear.

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To see VVisdom, and Power, and Greatness, and Goodness, and Justice, and Mercy, and Immensity, and Eternity ; to see the Lord of Hosts, the chiefest, the only Good ; to see God himself, unvailing himself, and shining forth in all his Glory before them, yea, to see Him smiling, as it were, upon them, rejoicing over them, demeaning himself as well-pleased with them ! VVho is able to conceive how much their blessed Souls are affected, delighted, transported with this blessed Sight ? None certainly but only they that have it. They know, yea, they feel it to be the greatest, the only perfect Happiness they can possibly enjoy. And that all things else could never satisfy their desires and so make them Happy, without this : VVhereas this would do it without all things else. It being impossible for them to desire any thing, but what they have in God, Infinite Goodness it self. In whom, by consequence, all their Inclinations meet as in their proper Center ; and so their Minds are always at rest and quiet, and their Souls full as they can hold of solid and substantial Joy, which makes them break forth continually into Praises and Hallelujahs to Almighty God, and to the Lamb that sitteth upon the Throne, who purchased such a Glorious Inheritance as this is for them, and settled it upon them for evermore.

But how can these things be ? How is it possible for the Saints in Heaven to see God ? To that the Apostle Answers in my Text, by calling

ling it the Inheritance of the Saints *in light*. It is true, All Men are born at first Spiritually blind, and so generally live in the Dark, seeing no more of God or any spiritual Object, than as if there was no such thing in being. But when a Man is born again, his Eyes are opened, and he is *turned from darkness to light*, *Acts. 26. 18.* as well as from the power of Satan unto God. And therefore all such are called the *Children of light*; and the *Children of the Day*; *1 Thess 5. 5.* because they have a *marvellous light* (as St. Peter calls it) constantly shining in them, *1 Pet. 2. 9.* whereby they discover many glorious things which lie perfectly hid to all other Mortals. By this *Elisha's* Servant, when his Eyes were opened, *saw the Mountain full of Horses and Chariots of fire*, *2 Kings 6. 17.* even a whole Legion of the Heavenly Host, round about his Master. By this St. Stephen *saw the Heavens opened, and Christ standing at the right hand of God*; *Acts. 7. 55, 56.* yea, by this *Moses saw him that is invisible*, *Heb. 11. 27.* God himself. And thus all that are real Saints, being the Children of Light, see more or less of God; at least so much as to make them Love, and Desire, and Fear, and Trust on Him above all things in the VWorld. Indeed they cannot see his Face and live, as He himself told *Moses*: But they see him as *Moses* did, *Exod. 33. 20.* in his Back-parts, in his VWorks, the Effects and Products of his Divine Perfections. And the reason why they

they cannot see his Face and live in this World, is because they are still in their imperfect State, and therefore cannot possibly have a perfect sight of so Glorious a Being ; or if they had, it would strike them Dead, for they could not possibly bear it ; or as *Job* expresseth it, *by reason of his highness they could not endure, Job 31. 23.* so as to live under it. But seeing God himself saith, that no Man shall see his Face, and live ; He thereby gives us to understand, That some shall see his Face when they are Dead, and departed out of this Life.

And so questionless do all the Saints that are in Heaven. For they live in a City *which hath no need of the Sun, nor of the Moon to shine in it : For the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Rev. 21. 23.* Or as the Prophet *Isaiah* words it, *The Lord is to them an everlasting light. Isa. 60. 19.* So that as the Sun is to us upon Earth, the fountain of all that Light whereby we see any Object here below ; so to the Saints that are above in Heaven, God himself is pleased to issue forth Light immediately from himself, which exceeds the light of the Sun, infinitely more than that exceeds the glimmering of a Gloworm. Neither doth it only shine, as the Sun doth, upon them, but into them, and so enlightens themselves too, as well as all things that are about them. And what is there in the World which they cannot see by such a Glorious, such an Infinite Light as this is ? By

this light they see not only the superficies, but the very substance and contexture of every creature they have a mind to look upon, as exactly as if it was perfectly anatomized and laid open before them. By this they see the several vertues, qualiries, and operations of things here below, and the great ends and purposes for which they are designed. By this, they see the causes of the ebbing and flowing of the Sea, and other great Phœnomena of nature, which so much puzzle Philosophy, and make it but a meer conjecture. By this, they see the secret and wonderful Powers that God hath put into all Animals and Vegetables, of propagating their respective Species, so that none of them ever did, or can ever fail to be in the VVorld. By this, they see both the composition and the several motions of the Sun and all the other Planets, as well as fixed Stars, and what influences they have upon terrestrial bodies. By this, they see the wise establishment of second Causes, how they depend upon one another, and all upon the first. The sight of which, and such-like things, must needs be an extraordinary pleasure to them; by reason of the most admirable Art and Contrivance they observe in them; and also because their faculties are by this means employed to the proper uses, for which they were made, and to which they therefore tend. For as God made all things for the manifestation of his own glory, he endued Men with Reason on
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purpose, that they might behold and admire the glory of those Perfections, which he manifested in them. And hence it is, that (all things naturally tending to their end) all Men naturally desire to know, and many apply their minds wholly to find out such things as those are. And if they can but guess at any of them with the least shew of reason, or so much as probability, they are mightily pleased with it. But what a pleasure then must it be, to have a full view and prospect of them, and of that infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness which appeareth in them, as the Saints in Heaven have, by that light which shines upon their Inheritance?

Moreover, by this Light they look back upon their former lives, and see the steady Hand of Providence ordering and over-ruling, not only the greater occurrences, but even the least circumstances in them; and the Holy Spirit of God making some use or other of every one of them, to work them over to himself. By this, they see God's infinite Love and Goodness to his Church Militant here on Earth, in all the straits and difficulties he brings it into, and how good and necessary it is for it, that every thing should be just as it is.

By this, they see the Holy Angels and all their fellow Citizens in the new *Hierusalem*, and converse familiarly with them, as we do with one another. By this, they see their ever Blessed Saviour, the Eternal Son of God
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in their Nature exalted at the Right Hand of the Father, far above all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named in Heaven or Earth. By this, they see all the Glory which the Father hath given him, as he himself once prayed they might. *John. 17. 24.* Yea, by this, they see the most High God Face to Face, even as we see the Sun by his own light : and that too, as clearly, as fully, as perfectly as it is possible for Creatures to do it. VVhich so refreshes, enlivens, elevates, and cheers their Spirits, that they are always rejoycing and singing, and praising God ; admiring, adoring, magnifying and giving thanks to his Almighty, All-glorious, and All-gracious Majesty, Father Son and Holy Ghost, for His Creating, Redeeming, and Sanctifying them so as to bring them through the various changes and chances of this mortal Life, to such an Inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, eternal in the Heavens, in Glory, in Bliss, in Light it self.

And now we are got upon the Mount, how well may we say with the Apostles, *It is good for us to be here : Mat. 17. 4.* Let us set up our Tents, and dwell continually upon the Contemplation of this glorious Inheritance of the Saints in light ! But alas ! how far as yet are we distant from it ? how unworthy of it ? how unmeet for it ? VVhat a deal of VVork have we to do before we can get thither ? But blessed

fed be God, we are in the ready way, living in such a Church wherein we have all things that can be desired in order to it. Let us not then despair, but use the utmost of our care and study to qualifie our selves aright for it, and we cannot miss of it.

For which purpose therefore let us consider in the next place, how we may be rightly qualified, or, as the Apostle here speaks, *made meet* to be partakers of this Inheritance of the Saints in light?

VWhere we may observe by the way, That the Apostle here supposeth, or rather takes it for granted, that all Men are not meet for it. Than which nothing can be more certain, None being meet to partake of the Inheritance of the Saints, but only they who are Saints themselves. God himself hath excluded all others from it, by his eternal and irrevocable Decree, that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Heb. 12. 14.* And indeed, none but Saints are subjects capable of it. For all others being still in their natural and sinful Estate, their Minds are so stuffed with vitious and gross Humours, that they cannot see the light; and so wholly inclined and bent upon sensual Objects, that they can take no pleasure in the joys of Heaven. But rather being altogether unclean and carnal, they have an utter aversion, if not an antipathy, against such pure and spiritual Delights, as being directly contrary to their corrupt Nature. Insomuch that Heaven it self would seem
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more like Hell than Heaven to them. The Place would seem melancholly, the Company irksome, the VVork tedious, the Light troublesome, every thing uneasie and disagreeable.

As suppose it should please Almighty God to take us all up immediately from this Place into the highest Heavens, and there set us all just at our Saviour's Elbow. All such who are real Saints among us, who love God above all things, how glad would they be to see him they love? to see their Saviour shining in all his Glory? How suddenly would they strike up with the Choir of Heaven in singing forth the praises of him that brought them thither? VVhat infinite pleasure would they take in the Place, the VVork, the Company, and every thing they see there? but as for others, who are still in their sins, and mind only Earthly things, how sad and disconsolate would they be? they would wonder to see the Saints so pleasant and joyfull; for as for their parts, they can see nothing there, which they care for. In the midst of light, they would be still in darkness: In sorrow, in the midst of joys. They cannot hear that Heavenly Musick; or if they did, it would sound harsh, all Discord to them. They cannot tast of those spiritual Dainties; or if they did, they could not relish, nor find any sweetness in them. They cannot see the Face of God; or if they did, they would not be pleased, but terrified and confounded at it; and wish with all their Souls to be out of that
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sad Place again, that they might mind the business, and enjoy the pleasures they like better. If that be Heaven, they never desire to come there any more. And all because they want that Principle of true grace and holiness, which should make them Saints, and so capacitate them for the enjoyment of those holy Pleasures, without which a blind Man may as well delight in Pictures, the deaf in Musick, yea a brute beast in Metaphysicks, as they in Heaven or in God himself.

By this therefore we may see how necessary it is to be holy before we can be happy; pure in Heart, before we can see God; real and true Saints, before we can partake of their Inheritance in light. And by consequence, as ever we desire to go to Heaven when we dye, we must take care while we live, to get our Hearts purged from all corrupt Affections, our Minds enlightened, and our Souls sanctified throughout, and inclined wholly unto God, so as to prefer him at least in some degree before all things else; that so we may go out of this VVorld, rightly disposed and fitted to behold the light of his Countenance, and to solace our selves in it, as the highest Object of our Souls desires. And then we may be sure that our desires shall be fully satisfied: For our Souls will be no sooner loosned from our Bodies, but they will be immediately carried up to Hea-

ven, and there partake of the Inheritance of the Saints in light. And at the last Day, our Bodies shall be united to our Souls again, and then both in Soul and Body, we shall enjoy all we can desire for evermore.

But who is sufficient for these things? How can we who were born, and have lived so long in Sin, ever be made so pure and holy, as to be meet to live with Saints and Angels, with Christ and God himself in the World to come? It is, I confess, no easie matter : But howsoever it is possible for every one here present to be so. Nay more than that, none of us can fail of it, unless we be failing to our selves in our endeavours after it. As we may easily perceive, if we do but consider how others have been ; and so how we our selves may be sanctified or made Saints, if we do but set our selves in good earnest about it.

For which End, we may observe, That this being too great a Work for us to do by our own strength, the Eternal Son of God himself was pleased to undertake it for us. And for that purpose, having taken our Nature upon him, he gave himself for us, as to redeem us from all iniquity, so *to purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* Tit. 2. 14. And so he is made unto us, *Wisdom as well as Righteousness ; Sanctification as well as Redemption ;* 1 Cor. 1. 30. that as we are justified and redeemed from our sins,
so

so we may be made wise and holy through him; who is the Fountain as of all the good things we do or can enjoy, so likewise of all the goodness and vertue we are or can be endued with. It all flows from him; who therefore tells us, that *without him we can do nothing.* John. 15. 5. But by him, there is nothing but we can do. As St. Paul found by experience, saying, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* Phil. 4. 13.

Hence therefore if we desire to be made holy, we must apply our selves to Christ, who although he be now in Heaven as to his Humane Nature, yet he is always present with us here below, both in his Divine Person, and also by his Holy Spirit, and so is ready upon all occasions to assist us in our endeavours after Piety, and to crown them with that success, as to make us sincerely Pious. For which purpose, as he sanctified our humane nature in general by assuming it into his Divine Person; so he sanctifieth our humane Persons in particular, by making us partakers of his Divine Nature: Which he doth, by sending his Holy Spirit, of the same Divine Nature with himself, into our Hearts, which by degrees makes us also holy and spiritual, and so in our Capacities, like unto himself, and partakers of his own Nature.

Now the great thing which he requires of

us, in order to his doing this great Work for us, is, that we believe in him. For he himself saith, that we are *sanctified by faith that is in him.* *Acts. 26. 18.* Not by believing only his Gospel in general to be true, but by believing particularly in himself, so as to have a sure trust and confidence on him, to give us such Illuminations and Assistances of his Holy Spirit, whereby we may be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, and so be made sincerely, as he is infinitely Pure and Holy. And indeed, this is the first and great thing that we ought to believe and trust in our Saviour for: and that which is the foundation of all our other Expectations from him. For we have no ground to expect either Pardon, or any other Blessing at his Hands, untill we repent and be converted. But if we firmly believe and depend upon him in the first place for Grace to repent and turn to God, and so to become holy and new Creatures, according to the Promises that he hath made us to that purpose; as he will then most certainly perform such Promises to us, so all the other Blessings that he hath purchased for us, will then follow in course. For if we be truly sanctified and made holy, then our Sins will be all pardoned, our Persons justified, our Duties accepted, God reconciled to us, and at length our Souls eternally saved. But all these things depend
upon

upon our being first sanctified by him, as that doth upon our believing in him.

But Faith, as the Apostle saith, *is the Gift of God* ; Ephes. 2. 8. and therefore if we desire to believe so as to be sanctified, we must ask and expect it from him, in the use of those Means which he hath appointed both for the begetting and increasing of it. We must Read, and Hear, and Meditate upon his Holy Word. We must Fast and Pray, and receive the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper. For these are the ordinary Means which God hath established in his Church, whereby to make known himself unto us, to convince us of the truth and certainty of his Promises, and so work and confirm in us a true belief of them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which for that purpose doth continually assist and influence the administration and performance of such Duties ; which therefore are not only holy Duties in themselves, but the Means too whereby we may become holy.

But for that purpose, we must perform, not only one or more, but all of them, so as to go through the whole Course that God hath prescribed for the healing of our spiritual Distempers, and for the restoring us to a sound frame and constitution of Mind, wherein, as I have shewn, the nature of true holiness properly consists.

And that we must do too, not only now
and

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and then, but through the whole course of our lives, so as to be constantly, as much as possibly we can, employed in some or other of these holy Exercises ; not in a careless and superficial manner, but heartily, sincerely, earnestly, as for our lives ; for our lives, our eternal lives in a great measure depend upon it: For it is by our continual exercise of those holy Duties and the Grace of God always Accompanying of them, that our Hearts are insensibly taken off from Sin and the World, and raised up higher and higher towards God and Heaven, till at length our whole souls being sanctified by a quick and lively Faith in Christ, we are *made meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in light.*

And what cause have they who are so, to give thanks, *as St. Paul* Here doth, to God the Father for it ? For the whole of our Salvation from first to Last, must be ascribed unto him. It is begun, continued, and ended all in him. For it was he, *who so loved the World, that he gave his only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. John. 3. 16.* It was He, *who spared not this his Son, but delivered him up Rom. 8. 32.* to be Tempted, to be scourged, to be Spit upon to be Arraigned, Condemned, Crucified, and all for us and for our Salvation. It was He, *who having raised up this his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us, by turning every one of us from his iniquities. Acts. 3. 26.* And
made

made him who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. 5. 21. It was he, who hath exalted him with his own right hand, to be both a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance and remission of sins. Acts. 5. 31. It is He, who hath passed by the greatest part of Mankind, and hath revealed Himself and his Son to us, the unworthiest of all his Creatures. It was He, who caused us to be born and bred within the Pale of his Holy Catholick Church, and in one of the soundest and purest parts of it upon the face of the whole Earth. It is He, who still continues the means of Grace to us, and us to them, and his Blessing both to them and us. It is He, who gives us his Holy Spirit, to mortifie the deeds of the flesh, and to quicken us with newness of life; to raise up our Minds from the World, and fix them upon himself; to keep us from evil, and to enable us to do, or suffer any thing we can for his sake. It is He, who calls upon us continually by the ministry of his Word, to Repent and Believe the Gospel, and gives us grace to do it. In a Word, It is He, who hath sent me, the unworthiest of all his Ministers, at this time to acquaint you in his Name, how ye may be meet partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light; and It is He alone can make you so.

And therefore all who are so made, may well join with the Choir of Heaven, in those Seraphick

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Seraphick Anthems &c. find them singing in the Revelations, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. Revel. 7. 10, 12.

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